

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ANKARA 04747 181056Z

44

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9637

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

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USIA WASHDC

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TAGS: PFOR, MASS, TU, CY, GR

SUBJ: TURKISH PRESS REACTION TO BASES DECISION

REF: A. ANKARA 4707, B. ANKARA 4732

1. WEDNESDAY (JUNE 19) EDITIONS OF MAJOR TURKISH DAILIES GAVE VERY HEAVY PLAY TO FOREIGN MINISTER CAGLAYANGIL'S ANNOUNCEMENT AND NEWS CONFERENCE TUESDAY CONCERNING THE STATUS OF BI-LATERAL COMMON DEFENSE INSTALLATION AGREEMENTS WITH THE U.S. (REF. A) RPP CHAIRMAN BULENT ECEVIT'S SHARP CRITICISM OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ACTION (REF. B) RECEIVED LITTLE PLAY IN PRO-GOVERNMENT DAILIES, BUT RECEIVED HEAVY COVERAGE IN PRO-RPP AND LEFT-OF-CENTER PAPERS AND ON UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 ANKARA 04747 181056Z

TUESDAY EVENING TELEVISION NEWS BROADCASTS. FORNIM

CAGLAYANGIL'S ANSWER TO QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT TUESDAY RECEIVED ONLY MINOR PLAY IN MOST DAILIES WEDNESDAY (SEE SEPTEL).

2. HEADLINES AND COPY ON THESE STORIES WERE STRAIGHT FORWARD. MOST REPORTS WERE CONFINED TO EXTENSIVE EXCERPTS FROM STATEMENTS BY CAGLAYANGIL AND ECEVIT.

3. AN EXCEPTION WAS A FRONT PAGE STORY IN CUMHURIYET BY ITS WELL-CONNECTED DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT UMIT GURTUNA, WHO SAID "POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES IN ANKARA" GREETED THE GOVERNMENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT WITH AMAZEMENT. ACCORDING TO GURTUNA, REPORTS BY FOREIGN OFFICE AND MILITARY EXPERTS ON COUNTER MEASURES TO BE TAKEN TO THE ARMS EMBARGO OUTLINED IMMEDIATE CLOSING OF AT LEAST SOME INSTALLATIONS WITHIN 24 HOURS. DURING MONDAY'S MEETING OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL, GURTUNA SAID, A 15-DAY WAITING PERIOD WAS AGREED UPON, BUT THIS WAS LENGTHENED TO 30 DAYS BY DECISION OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS LATER THE SAME DAY. GURTUNA REPORTED THAT "EXPERTS" WITH WHOM HE TALKED BELIEVED THAT PRESIDENT FORD'S "LAST MINUTE MESSAGE" TO PRIME MINISTER DEMIREL MAY HAVE BEEN INFLUENTIAL IN THIS DECISION.

4. EDITORIAL REACTION TO THE GOVERNMENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT TUESDAY WAS MIXED, RANGING FROM UNENTHUSIASTIC TO NEGATIVE.

5. MILLIYET EDITOR ABDI IPEKCI SAID IN A FRONT PAGE COMMENTARY THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD ATTEMPTED TO FOLLOW A MIDDLE-OF-THE-ROAD POLICY WHICH WOULD AVOID AN ESCALATION IN THE DETERIORATION OF TURCO-AMERICAN RELATIONS. HE WARNED THAT IF THE AMERICAN CONGRESS DOES NOT ACT TO RESTORE AID WITHIN THE NEXT 30 DAYS, NO TURKISH GOVERNMENT WOULD BE ABLE TO AVOID TAKING DRASTIC ACTION.

6. PRO-DEMIREL SON HAVADIS DECLARED THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN GIVEN ITS LAST CHANGE TO END THE EMBARGO AND THAT THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED THAT DISCUSSIONS NOT BE PROLONGED. "TURKEY HAS ENTERED A NEW FOREIGN POLICY PHASE. THERE ARE NO CONCESSIONS. THERE ARE MUTUAL INTERESTS... UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 ANKARA 04747 181056Z

MOST PROBABLY, THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT HAS NOW REALIZED THAT TURKEY WILL NOT BE THE GUARDIAN OF AMERICAN INTERESTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST UNLESS THE PRINCIPLE OF MUTUALITY IS RESPECTED."

7. FAR MORE NEGATIVE IN TONE WAS THE LEAD EDITORIAL IN RIGHT-WING HURRIYET, TURKEY'S LARGEST DAILY. UNDER THE HEALINE "THIS MUST BE THE END," HURRIYET SAID THE

GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO WAIT 30 DAYS HAD AIDED THE U.S. IN ITS STALLING TACTICS. IT WARNED THAT THE GOVERNMENT MUST NOT PERMIT THESE THRITY DAYS TO BECOME A "PERIOD OF RETREAT."

8. HURRIYET COLUMNIST/REPORTER CUNEYT ARCA YUREK IN A FRONT PAGE COMMENTARY CALLED THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT "WINDOW-DRESSING." SAID ARCA YUREK: "AFTER LISTENING TO FOREIGN MINISTER CAGLAYANGIL, WE HAVE UNDERSTOOD THAT, AS A STATE, WE WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO PLEASE THE UNITED STATES."

9. YASAR AYSEV, EDITOR OF THE PRO-RPP BARIS, IN A FRONT PAGE COMMENTARY ECHOED MR. ECEVIT'S CRITICISM OF TUESDAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT. UNDER THE HEADLINE, "THE MOUNTAIN HAS GIVEN BIRTH TO A MOUSE," AYSEV SAID THAT AS A RESULT OF ITS FUNDAMENTAL POLICIES AND PRINCIPLES, THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT "CANNOT STAKE ITS CHIPS ON A MOVE AGAINST THE UNITED STATES." IN CONSEQUENCE, ITS FOREIGN POLICY IS INDECISIVE AND IT CANNOT PROTECT THE VITAL INTERESTS OF THE COUNTRY.
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